

CHAPTER 24 SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL

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CHAPTER 24 SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL

24.1 INTRODUCTION

Established in 1999, the Safe Routes to School (SR2S) program came into effect from the passage and signing of Assembly Bill 1475 (AB 1475). In 2001, Senate Bill 10 (SB 10) was enacted which extended the program for three additional years. In 2004, SB 1087 was enacted to extend the program three more years. It is now scheduled to sunset on January 1, 2008. Information on all three bills can be found at www.leginfo.ca.gov.

Section 2333.5 of the Streets and Highways Code calls for Caltrans, in consultation with the California Highway Patrol (CHP), to make grants available to local governmental agencies under the program based upon the results of a statewide competition.

The goals of the program are to reduce injuries and fatalities to school children and to encourage increased walking and bicycling among students.

The program achieves these goals by constructing facilities that enhance the safety for pedestrians and bicyclists. By enhancing the safety of the pathways, trails, sidewalks, and crossings, the likelihood of attracting and encouraging additional students to walk and bike increases.

These guidelines contain several references to other publications. Below are some links to websites that may be useful when preparing an application:

Caltrans SR2S Home Page	www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LocalPrograms/saferoute2.htm
CA Dep't of Health Services	www.cawalktoschool.com/ www.caphysicalactivity.org/ www.dhs.ca.gov/routes2school/
US Dep't of Health and Human Services-CDC	www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/kidswalk/pdf/kidswalk.pdf
Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center	www.walktoschool-usa.org/ www.pedbikeinfo.org/
Local Government Commission	www.lgc.org/freepub/land_use/factsheets/child_transp_tools.html
National Center for Bicycling and Walking	www.bikewalk.org/safe_routes_to_school/SR2S/resources.htm
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration	www.nhtsa.dot.gov/people/injury/pedbimot/bike/saferouteshtml/toc.html
Caltrans Traffic Operations	www.dot.ca.gov/hq/traffops
Caltrans Bikeway Planning & Design	www.dot.ca.gov/hq/oppd/hdm/pdf/chp1000.pdf
Pedestrian Access on State Highways: DIB 82-01	www.dot.ca.gov/hq/oppd/dib/dib82-01.pdf
U.S. Dep't of Justice - ADA	www.ada.gov/
CA Division of State Architect	www.dsa.dgs.ca.gov/
Federal Access Board	www.access-board.gov/indexes/pubsindex.htm
Surface Transportation Policy Project	www.transact.org/ca/

24.2 ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

The applicant, or project sponsor, is the agency that assumes responsibility and accountability for the use and expenditure of SR2S funds. The applicant must be an incorporated city or a county within the State of California. Exceptions to this requirement will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. Applicants that do not represent a city or county must provide written justification for the exception and attach it to the application.

24.3 FUNDING FACTS

The SR2S program is primarily a construction program. Projects funded by the program will improve the safety of students who walk or bike to school and will encourage more students to do so.

The amount of funds available for the program is determined by statutory formula. Based upon 2004/2005 Federal safety fund apportionment levels, this program can expect a funding level of between \$24 and \$28 million for each of the next three years.

The maximum reimbursement percentage for any SR2S project is 90 percent. The maximum amount of SR2S funds that will be allocated to any single project is \$450,000.

If the total cost for a project exceeds \$500,000 (\$450,000 reimbursable), the applicant must fund the balance of the project cost with other funds.

Section III of the Application Form (Exhibit 24A) provides a table where the applicant can show funding arrangements for the project.

Costs for programs or activities related to education, enforcement or encouragement activities are eligible for reimbursement but must be incidental to the overall cost of the project. These activities may include, but are not limited to, preparing and distributing safety and health awareness materials, coordinating 'walking bus' efforts, developing education programs for school personnel, students, parents, and other partners and stakeholders, directing outreach efforts that promote walking and bicycling to and from school, etc.

Construction improvements must be made on public property. Improvements can be made on public school grounds providing the cost is incidental to the overall cost of the project.

Incidental costs should not exceed 10 percent of the construction costs.

The SR2S statutes allow Caltrans to substitute state funds for Federal funds. Caltrans recommends that local agencies request state funds when they are available. However, at any time during the project initiation stage, a local agency may request a project to be funded with federal funds.

Projects being funded with Federal funds must be included in the Federal Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (FSTIP).

Requests to increase project reimbursement costs will not be granted except in unusual circumstances and subject to the availability of funds. The earlier a request is made in the project development cycle, the greater the chance of it being approved.

24.4 RATING FACTORS

In accordance with Streets and Highways Code Section 2333.5(b), applications will be rated on the following six factors:

- (1) Demonstrated needs of the applicant.
- (2) Potential of the proposal for reducing child injuries and fatalities.
- (3) Potential of the proposal for encouraging increased walking and bicycling among students.
- (4) Identification of safety hazards.
- (5) Identification of current and potential walking and bicycling routes to school.
- (6) Consultation and support for projects by school-based associations, local traffic engineers, local elected officials, law enforcement agencies, school officials, and other relevant community stakeholders.

A seventh factor that the application will be rated on is the evidence of commitment by teachers, parents, students, school officials, law enforcement officials, public works officials, public health officials, etc. to continue to develop and promote a comprehensive SR2S program inclusive of Education, Engineering, Enforcement and Encouragement.

Other general factors that the application will be rated on include: practicality, completeness, accuracy, neatness, funding history, funding partnerships, and past project implementation performance.

24.5 ELIGIBLE PROJECT COMPONENTS

A Safe Routes to School project can have several components. The following categories of work identify components that are eligible for reimbursement. Notations are made on components where eligibility could be questionable. When in doubt, contact the District Local Assistance Engineer.

Pedestrian facilities: Includes new sidewalks, sidewalk widening, sidewalk gap closures, curbs, gutters, and curb ramps. Also includes new pedestrian trails, paths and pedestrian over- and under-crossings.

Note: Sidewalk repairs are ineligible. Applicants that propose sidewalk repairs will need to explain why the procedures contained in Streets and Highways Code Section 5611 cannot be exercised to repair the sidewalk. This section allows municipalities to instruct property owners to repair sidewalks on, or fronting, their property.

Traffic calming: Includes roundabouts, bulb-outs, speed humps, raised crosswalks, raised intersections, median refuges, narrowed traffic lanes, lane reductions, full- or half-street closures, and other speed reduction techniques.

Note: Improvements to pick-up and drop-off areas are ineligible. The goal of this program is to encourage students to walk and bike to school. Exceptions may be granted if the project increases walking and biking by students and reduces the exposure of students to vehicles using a pick-up/drop-off area.

Traffic control devices: Includes new or upgraded traffic signals, crosswalks, pavement markings, traffic signs, traffic stripes, in-roadway crosswalk lights, flashing beacons, bicycle-sensitive signal actuation devices, pedestrian countdown signals, vehicle speed feedback signs, pedestrian activated signal upgrades, and all other pedestrian- and bicycle-related traffic control devices.

Note: Applications that include traffic control devices that require minimum ‘warrants’ to be satisfied prior to their installation must attach the warrant sheets to the application. Traffic control devices that are not included in the most current Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices and the MUTCD California Supplement will not be approved for installation unless the applicant receives approval to experiment with a traffic control device under the processes described below.

Bicycle facilities: Includes new or upgraded bikeways, trails, paths, geometric improvements, shoulder widening, and bicycle parking facilities, racks and lockers.

Note: Pavement repair and rehabilitation of traffic lanes are ineligible.

Public Outreach and Education: Includes preparing and distributing safety awareness materials to school personnel, students, drivers, and neighboring home and/or business owners. Includes outreach efforts that promote walking and bicycling, to and from school, along the designated school routes. Includes coordinating bicycle rodeos with law enforcement agencies or forming walking buses within neighborhoods.

Note: Compensation for crossing guards is ineligible. All public outreach and education work is considered ‘incidental’ and limited to 10% of the construction costs.

General note regarding all categories: Ineligible project components may be included in the project scope but review committee members will flag them as ‘non-reimbursable items’. Ineligible components will be removed from the project cost estimate when calculating reimbursement values. Applicants will be notified of ineligible components if the project is successful and recommended for funding. If you have questions about the eligibility of components in your project, contact your District Local Assistance Engineer (DLAE).

USE OF EXPERIMENTAL TRAFFIC CONTROL DEVICES

Applicants that propose to install an experimental traffic control device on a public roadway must follow the process prescribed in Section 1A.11 of the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) published by FHWA. A direct link to the MUTCD can be found at mutcd.fhwa.dot.gov/. The public agency should also comply with the experimental process of the California Traffic Control Devices Committee at www.dot.ca.gov/hq/traffops/signtech/newtech/.

24.6 ELIGIBLE PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION ACTIVITIES

Project implementation activities that are eligible for reimbursement include:

- Preliminary engineering:
 - Environmental clearance
 - Preparation of Plans, Specifications and Estimate (PS&E)

- Right-of-way:
 - Engineering
 - Appraisals and acquisition
 - Utilities
- Construction:
 - Construction costs
 - Construction engineering
- Public education and outreach

Reimbursements for public education and outreach activities are limited to 10% of the construction costs.

24.7 APPLICATION FORM INSTRUCTIONS

The Application Form (Exhibit 24-A) must be completed in its entirety. It must not exceed 30 single-sided pages in length. It must be bound only by a staple in the upper left hand corner and must not have a separate cover.

One original application and one copy must be received in the appropriate Caltrans District Office by close of business on the established due date.

Any maps, schematics, drawings or letters of support that are attached to the application should be made on 8-1/2" x 11" paper. If this is not reasonable, the attachment must be folded to meet those dimensions.

Do not embed graphics within the application form. Photos, graphics and other visuals should be included only as attachments.

The Application Form on the SR2S website is formatted to allow a limited number of characters for each response. In **Section II**, if the limited space is insufficient to identify all of the schools involved with the proposed improvements, attach a school list to the application. Also in **Section II**, if the space provided to describe the proposed improvements and the project location is insufficient, use the ample space provided in **Section V**, Question 1.

The applicant must indicate the number of applications being submitted for review. If more than one application is being submitted, the priority of each application must be noted, e.g., if three applications are submitted, then a different priority must be assigned to each of the three applications. The review committees will take the priorities into account when rating applications, but the priority assigned by the applicant does not guarantee a higher-ranked application being funded before a lower-ranked application.

The applicant must decide if application reviewers can reduce the scope and the cost of a project if it contains ineligible or ineffective components.

Section IV requires the applicant to estimate completion dates for five major milestones. The estimated dates should be based upon the application being approved for funding on July 1 of the same year applicant is completing the application form.

Section V contains seven questions the applicant must answer in essay form. There are no limits to the response lengths of any single question, but no more than 12 pages should be used to answer all seven questions.

The applicant should enlist the assistance of other participants in the development and submittal of an SR2S project. Other participants could include school boards, school districts, elected officials, health and safety officials, community groups, students, and various city, county, and state agencies. The success of a project proposal being approved for funding will depend upon the ability of the applicant and participants to develop a comprehensive and unified solution to improving the safety and encouraging the use of pedestrian and/or bicycle routes to and from schools within their jurisdiction.

It is advised that applicants focus on preparing one or two, but not more than three project applications. Prioritize candidate projects and focus on preparing excellent applications for the most deserving schools. It is rare for any single local agency to receive funding for more than one project in a single funding cycle. Exceptions to this rule might apply to the few local agencies in the state that have hundreds of schools under their jurisdiction.

Applicants are encouraged to attach supporting documentation. Applications that do not contain the suggested attachments are not likely to receive high rankings by review committees. Applicants should attach a general map, a site plan, some photographs, a detailed estimate, and letters of support. When available, attach an incident or crash summary table and collision diagram. Remember, the entire application must not exceed 30 single-sided pages.

When preparing the detailed estimate, download the document provided on the SR2S website, or create your own spreadsheet with identical information. The construction costs tabulated in the detailed engineer's estimate should equal the construction costs shown in **Section III**.

Section VI requires the applicant and a school official to sign the application. Applications submitted without appropriate signatures will be disqualified from review.

If the SR2S project encompasses a freeway, state highway or county road where the CHP has enforcement authority, the application must be approved, and signed, by the CHP. All other projects should be endorsed by the local law enforcement agency.

24.8 PROJECT SELECTION PROCESS

Caltrans will solicit applications by notifying all local agencies throughout the state. The date when agencies are notified may vary from year to year. Agencies will be provided approximately 12 weeks to prepare and submit an application.

Applicants must submit their application on or before the due date. Shortly thereafter, Caltrans will assemble a District Review Committee comprised of local and regional stakeholders to assist in the ranking and prioritization of projects. Caltrans staff should constitute no more than 50% of the committee representation. Applications will be rated as excellent, good, fair, poor or ineligible. The District Review Committee will submit their District list, along with a copy of each project application and evaluation form, to Caltrans Headquarters.

Caltrans Headquarters will assemble a Statewide Project Recommendation Committee comprised of representatives from the CHP, FHWA, Department of Health Services, Department of Education, city and county public works associations, Institute of Transportation Engineers, pedestrian and bicycle advocacy groups, and other stakeholders. This committee will rank all projects on a statewide basis and submit a recommended list of projects to be funded to the Director of Caltrans and the Commissioner of the CHP. The final list will be posted on the SR2S website at www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LocalPrograms/. All local agencies that submitted applications will be notified of the results.

24.9 DESIGN STANDARDS

All bikeway projects shall be designed in accordance with the Caltrans *Highway Design Manual* and the Caltrans *Traffic Manual*. All other projects shall be designed in accordance with the appropriate design standards applicable to the type and location of the improvement.

Chapter 11, “Design Standards,” of the LAPM, describes statewide design standards, specifications, procedures, guides and references that are acceptable for application in the geometric, drainage, and structural design of local assistance projects. The chapter also describes design exception approval procedures. These standards and procedures shall be used in the design of SR2S projects off the National Highway System (NHS).

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT REQUIREMENTS

All projects shall meet the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements. The U.S. Department of Justice and the Federal Access Board both have very comprehensive websites committed to accessible pedestrian design. The websites include ADA design standards, a design guide, and references to the Transportation Equity Act (TEA) for the 21st Century. The two websites are respectively located at: <http://www.ada.gov/> and <http://www.access-board.gov/indexes/pubsindex.htm>

The California Division of State Architect (DSA) promulgates regulations and building standards which generally prescribe a standard of accessibility or usability equal to, or greater than those provided by the Accessibility Guidelines prepared by the Federal Access Board as adopted by the United States Department of Justice to implement the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (Public Law 101-336). DSA’s website, including a current version of the “*DSA’s California Access Compliance Reference Manual*,” is located at: <http://www.dsa.dgs.ca.gov/>.

Local agency plans and specifications with pedestrian facilities to be constructed with State funds must be reviewed and approved by DSA. The local agency will obtain DSA approval of the plans and specifications, and pay fees directly to DSA. For additional information and to contact a DSA representative in your area, visit the website mentioned above.

24.10 STATUS REPORTS

Local agencies are required to provide an update of project schedules and costs no later than July 1 of each year for each project that has not been awarded a construction contract. If the project is under construction, a Project Status Report does not have to be submitted. Failure to provide a Project Status Report may result in the project being dropped from the program. The report should be mailed to the appropriate DLAE. A sample Project Status Report form is included as Exhibit 24-B.

24.11 DEADLINES

If the project is funded with Federal funds, the local agency should have Federal funds obligated and a construction contract awarded by September 30th of the Federal fiscal year in which the project is programmed. If the project is funded with state funds, the local agency should have state funds encumbered and a construction contract awarded by June 30th of the state fiscal year in which the project is programmed. Projects unable to meet these original deadlines may be provided a time extension, for a maximum period of one year, subject to written approval by the DLAE. Projects unable to meet the second delivery deadline will be dropped from the program unless documentation that justifies the delay is submitted to and approved by Caltrans HQ.

24.12 EVALUATIONS

Successful applicants may be asked to conduct a before/after study or they may be asked to provide data to other researchers who are evaluating the program's effectiveness. Successful applicants should assist researchers when asked to do so. Safety deficiencies that are corrected by this program may justify continued or increased funding in future budgets.

24.13 REFERENCES

Title 23, United States Code, Section 120 and 152
California Streets and Highways Code, Sections 890-894 and 2330-2334
Caltrans *Local Assistance Program Guidelines*
Caltrans *Local Assistance Procedures Manual*
Caltrans *Highway Design Manual*
Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices and MUTCD California Supplement
AASHTO: *A Policy on Geometric Design of Highways and Streets*

SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL

APPLICATION FORM ~ 6TH CYCLE

Please read the Interim Safe Routes to School Program Guidelines available on the SR2S website and pay special attention to Section 24.7 - Application Form Instructions - while preparing this application. An incomplete or altered application format will be disqualified from further review. The entire application package, including attachments, shall not exceed 30 pages.

This page must be the first page of the application. Applications must be stapled in the upper left hand corner. Applications bound by any other means will not be accepted, e.g. binders, protective covers, spiral threading, etc. A transmittal letter, if submitted, should be attached to the application with a removable binder clip.

I. APPLICATION INFORMATION

Applicant (Agency): _____

Address: _____

City: _____ **County:** _____ **Zip:** _____

Contact Person: _____

Phone: _____ **Ext:** _____ **E-Mail:** _____

Metropolitan Planning Organization: _____

II. PROJECT INFORMATION

School Names(s): _____

School District(s): _____

State Legislative Districts: Senate: _____ **Assembly:** _____ **Caltrans District** _____

Project Description: Provide a brief description of the proposed project improvements.

Project Location: Provide a brief description of the general location(s) of the proposed project.

Total number of project applications being submitted by your agency? _____

If more than one application is being submitted, what is the priority of this application? _____

Improvement categories included in the proposed project: (check all that apply)

- ☐ Pedestrian Facilities ☐ Bicycle Facilities
- ☐ Traffic Control Devices ☐ Traffic Calming and Speed Reduction
- ☐ Public Outreach and Education ☐ Other (describe) _____

III. PROJECT COST ESTIMATE

	Federal or State SR2S Funds	Local Funds	Other Funds	Total Cost
Preliminary Engineering				
Environmental	\$	\$	\$	\$
PS&E	\$	\$	\$	\$
Right of Way				
Engineering	\$	\$	\$	\$
Appraisals & Acquisitions	\$	\$	\$	\$
Utilities	\$	\$	\$	\$
Construction				
Construction	\$	\$	\$	\$
Construction Engineering	\$	\$	\$	\$
Public Outreach & Education *				
Includes education, enforcement, and training activities.	\$	\$	\$	\$
Subtotal	\$	\$	\$	\$
Contingency**	\$	\$	\$	\$
Total Project Cost***	\$	\$	\$	\$

* Public Outreach & Education "Total Cost" may not exceed 10% of the Construction "Total Cost".

** Contingency "Total Cost" may not exceed 10% of the "Subtotal".

*** SR2S funds may not exceed 90% of "Total Cost" or \$450,000.

In some cases, the review committee may recommend that a project be funded providing certain components are removed from the project scope. Will the applicant proceed with the construction of the project if its scope and cost are reduced? Y or N

IV. PROJECT SCHEDULE

Estimate dates of completion for the major milestones shown below assuming the project is approved for funding on July 1.

Complete Environmental Document	_____
Obtain Right of Way Clearance	_____
Advertise Project for Construction	_____
Award Construction Contract	_____
Complete Construction	_____

V. EVALUATION CRITERIA

The applicant's responses to the following will be used to evaluate the proposed project.

1. Provide a detailed description of the project scope and the locations targeted for improvement. Expand upon the descriptions provided on the 1st page of the application. Reference your exhibits or attachments in this section.
2. Describe the reasons you are applying for SR2S funds. Describe the risks facing students who walk or bike to school. Cite any other concerns using accident data, demographics, community and school surveys or audits, traffic volumes, and other environmental factors, as appropriate. Include a description of the affected student population (i.e. socio-economic status, ethnicity, transportation options, urban/rural/suburban) and a brief history of the neighborhood traffic issues that might provide some context and background for the project.
3. Describe how your proposed solution was developed, e.g., were alternatives explored or other remedies (such as educational or enforcement measures) tested? Describe the process and the entities that were involved in selecting the proposed solution. Describe why the proposed solution is the best alternative to correct the problem. Describe how the project will reduce child pedestrian and bike-related injuries and fatalities.
4. Describe any ongoing and/or planned Safe Routes to School program efforts specifically targeted towards education, encouragement, and enforcement activities. Provide information about the roles assumed by the teachers, parents, students, health officials, law enforcement officers, and other local agencies or community groups. If known, elaborate on the elements that have been successful.

5. Describe how the proposed project would encourage more students to walk or bicycle to and from school more frequently. Provide an estimate for the increased number of children that would walk and bicycle on a daily basis due to the project. Describe if the project alone will enable increased walking and bicycling, or if other Safe Routes to School program efforts will be required.

6. If the proposed project has funding sources from other agencies or grant providers, identify the funding sources, their amounts, and how the funds will complement the SR2S funds, either in additional infrastructure improvements or in the development of education, enforcement and encouragement activities. Describe the coordination of other projects, if applicable. Is the project the first of other future, planned projects? Is it the continuation of a previous project?

7. Describe any environmental issues or concerns that may impact the delivery of the project.

8. The following attachments are required:

- A. A general map showing the location of all proposed improvements and their proximity to the school and school routes.
- B. A site plan for each improvement location showing existing and proposed conditions.
- C. Detailed Engineer's Estimate (use form provided on SR2S website)
- D. Letters of support from project partners and advocacy groups.
- E. Applicable 'warrants' for projects with traffic control devices.

Photographs supplementing "A" and "B" above are highly recommended.

VI. APPLICATION SIGNATURES

The undersigned affirms that the statements contained in the application package are true and complete to the best of their knowledge.

Local Agency Official

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Title: _____

Phone Number: _____

Email: _____

School Official

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Title: _____

Phone Number: _____

Email: _____

California Highway Patrol Approval

If the SR2S project application proposes improvements on a freeway, state highway, or county road having California Highway Patrol (CHP) enforcement authority, a CHP Officer must approve of the project.

California Highway Patrol Approval:

(Signature)

(Print Signing Officer's Name and Division)

Local Law Enforcement Agency Approval

If the SR2S project application proposes improvements that do not require a CHP Officer's approval, it is recommended that the applicant either obtain a letter of support from the local law enforcement agency to show acknowledgement and support of the project or have a local law enforcement representative sign below:

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Project Status Report

Due July 1 each year

("Required" only if a construction contract has not been awarded by July 1)

Date: _____

Agency: _____

Project Number: _____

Description of Project: _____

Original Projected Award Date: _____

Current Projected Award Date: _____

If "current" award date is not the same as "original" award date, explain reason for change: _____

Original Cost Estimate: _____

Cost Estimate as of this Report: _____

Reason for difference (increase or decrease): _____

Other comments: _____

Prepared By: _____

Telephone: _____

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